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SPORTS

Winchester volleyball sweeps away the competition with dominating performances

JOE MCCONNELL | SPORTS EDITOR

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Winchester High senior volleyball captain Johanna Melhorn spikes the ball over the net during the match against Wilmington last month. COURTESY PHOTO/ALLI GAIKO

The Winchester High School girls volleyball team (16-0) is cruisin postseason, and, if its last five matches are any indication of what

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ahead, November just might be a month to remember.

The Red & Black not only won the five, but they did so convincingly by shutouts over the likes of Lexington (Oct. 7), Watertown (Oct. 9), non-league Bellingham (Oct. 10), Arlington (Oct. 14) and Burlington (Oct. 16)

In that Lexington matchup on the road, coach John Fleming said that "Karen Huai (2 aces) served really (well), and got us going on a couple of good runs."

The veteran coach also singled out Hazel Lovins, who had "some big-time swings with 19 kills," but otherwise he added, "the offense was really spread out, with Johanna (Melhorn), Maddie (Crooks) and Viviana (Cella) all getting multiple kills."

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Winchester High junior volleyball player Bella Comes gets set to serve the ball against Wilmington last month. COURTESY PHOTO/ALLI GAIKO

Against Watertown at the McCall Middle School gym, the Winchester girls tried a few different lineups, and everybody responded really well, according to Fleming, who went on to say, “our seniors really led the charge. Nora (Harstad) had seven kills to pace the attack, while Gwen (Gaiko) and (Melhorn) were terrific at the net. Julia (Campo) (sparked) the defense in the back row.”

Bellingham, a team that played in back-to-back Division 4 state finals and will be in the mix this fall as a Division 3 club, then came up to McCall gym last week to test the Red & Black as a program with postseason experience.

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“We knew that they would have a great year this season, and I thought it would be a good matchup to help us prepare for the state tournament,” said Fleming. “(Crooks) and Kaiyal (Kumaran) both were terrific in receiving serves. Hazel (collected) 15 kills, but more impressively was hitting at a .355 rate. (Melhorn) had three blocks, and was very disruptive at the net. I thought (Huai) with five digs and two blocks had one of her best (matches) of the season. Defne (Mergen) did a nice job in distributing the offense with 29 assists. This was a good overall win against a strong opponent.”

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Winchester High junior volleyball player Defne Mergen gets ready to serve the ball against Wilmi… month. COURTESY PHOTO/ALLI GAIKO

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The Red & Black started a new week the same way they have been doing it since early September with another dominating win, this time it was against visiting Arlington, followed by a road triumph over Burlington that led into another challenge versus host Newton North, authors of three straight Division 1 titles, to complete the penultimate week of the regular season on Oct. 17. The Tigers (14-2) are currently third in the Division 1 power rankings, just ahead of fourth-seeded Winchester, according to the Oct. 17 poll. Chelmsford and Shrewsbury are the top two teams in the division with identical 17-0 records.

Woburn (Oct. 20, Winchester High gym, 5:30 p.m.), Reading (Oct. 22, at RMHS, 5:45 p.m.) and Belmont (Oct. 24, Winchester High gym, 5:30 p.m.) will close out a regular season to remember next week with the state tournament right around the corner.

Joe McConnell is a longtime, award-winning sports editor for numerous North Shore publications. He began covering Winchester sports for the News last November.

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SPORTS

Winchester boys basketball heads to Bridgewater-Raynham for Sweet 16 game after beating Lexington in postseason opener

It was the third meeting this year between Middlesex League boys basketball rivals Lexington (16-5, 11th seed) and Winchester (17-4, 22nd seed). They split the first two during the regular season, thus making this Round of 32 postseason matchup the impromptu rubber game of this year's series, with the

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SPORTS

Winchester wrestling enjoys Top 10 finish at state divisional meet; senior captains move on to All-States

After the Winchester High qualified wrestlers competed hard over two days last weekend (Feb. 20, 21) in the State Division 1 Meet at North Andover High School, Mother Nature gave them a break to rest and recuperate with Monday's blizzard that resulted in two days off from school. There

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Winchester boys hockey advances to the Sweet 16 after beating Wachusett in the tournament opener

SPORTS

With postseason starting Friday night, WHS boys hoo… English, Sarpong, Bu… Middlesex League elite

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The Winchester High boys hockey team (12-9-2), the 17th seed, edged the 16th-seeded Wachusett Regional Mountaineers (18-2-1), 5-4 in a Round of 32 Division 1 state tournament game at Westborough's Northstar Ice Arena on Feb. 25. The Red & Black will now take on top seed Catholic Memorial (18-2-1)

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February 27, 2026

The Winchester High boys basketball team, the 22nd seed, will take on Middlesex League rival Lexington, the 11th seed, to begin the Division 1 state tournament in the Round of 32 on Friday night, Feb. 27, starting at 6 p.m. These teams are so evenly matched, beginning with the

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Latest

NEWS

Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

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March 4, 2026

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

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EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents ‘Syldason: You Are Welcome Here’

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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NEWS

Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

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